affecting its welfare, even although they might not thereby pledge themselves to any particular cause of action. He had been a member of the committee of the Institute on competitions, and had thereby been fully impressed with the importance of the present question. Their deliberations indeed had been more interesting than satisfactory. Certainly a great reform was needed, not only in the conduct of committees, but of architects themselves, otherwise they might seek in vain for any improvement in the practice of competitions. In principle, competition was most wholesome and desirable, both for the public and the profession. It had broken down the monopoly which he remembered to exist about thirty years ago, when all the patronage of public works was confined to three architects, under the title of the "Board of Works." Instead of giving the public the benefit of their collective wisdom, from some personal feeling the members of that board never met in the same room; but dividing the metropolis into three districts, contrived each to keep to himself all that he could get in his own territory. To ensure honourable and well-conducted competition was their present object; and the first requisites were clear and definite instructions, and a faithful adherence to them. Ignorance and intrigue too often lead to gross injustice; but if architects entered into competitions without a fair and reasonable prospect that justice would be done, they had no right to complain of any injury which they might suffer. A certain amount of professional assistance was essential to committees, as generally constituted. The responsibility should rest with those who invited the competition, but through ignorance, or want of precaution, they might err,—perhaps innocently. The mere preparation of a tabular statement, showing the relative characteristics of each design, might render valuable assistance to a committee. He remembered an instance where it had been shown by that means, that the greatest quantity of building was actually attached to the lowest estimate. A jury deciding in a court of law were assisted by such evidence on both sides as enabled them to judge rightly, and made them inexcusable if they judged wrong; and committees on competitions should have the same advantages. He should be glad if the labours of the proposed committee proved successful.

Mr. Fripp seconded the resolution. He had come from Bristol on purpose to attend the meeting, and had much pleasure in supporting the Institute's report, as the ground-work of future measures. His only wonder was that it had not been acted upon before. Competition he feared was much worse managed in the country than in London: at all events nothing could be worse than it was in his own district. There, however, a partial combination among architects,—refusing to compete unless certain conditions were adopted,—had been, in one instance at least, successful. But even there the matter was not decided: a mixed committee of twelve or fourteen builders, surveyors, tradesmen, and "gentlemen of taste," had selected what, to a professional man, was obviously the most expensive design submitted to them. It was notorious, too, that such a committee could arrive at a decision much more speedily than any three architects. Professional advice, therefore, was essential; and he would refer the selection to an architect solely,—still, however, making the committee responsible for adopting or rejecting his decision.

Mr. Hall said—The resolution proposed assumed that all architects were agreed on the principle of competition. That question was in some degree evaded by the report of the Institute. He was himself entirely averse to competitions, and his opinion was strengthened by the arguments he had just heard. With regard to the malpractices referred to by Mr. Fowler, there was no fear of such occurrences in the present day. The improved state of public education, and the exertions of the press—especially the weekly architectural newspapers—would effectually prevent these abuses. The difficulties of competition began with the framing of the instructions. Sufficiently copious instructions, such as were prepared for King's College Hospital, could only be made out by one who was qualified to act as architect to the building; and who ought, therefore, to be the man employed. The more precise the instructions, the more were the suggestions of competitors cramped, and rendered valueless. The ignorance of committees was strikingly shewn by the first competition for the Army and Navy Club. After two days' examination of the drawings on that occasion, he (the speaker) was quite unable to decide upon them; yet he had no doubt the committee had then made their selection. And hence the difficulty of furnishing committees with professional aid; for no architect could devote the necessary time to the selection—in the case of extensive buildings—without a high remuneration. The great argument against competition was, that it tended to introduce a commercial spirit into the profession. Commerce, certainly, might be conducted more honourably than it generally was; but in its most perfect state proceedings were considered right and proper between competitors in trade, which professional men could only regard as dishonourable and discreditable. Before assenting, therefore, to the principle of competition, it was necessary to assent to those of commerce; and he was sorry to say some architects, by so eagerly entering into competitions, did act upon these principles. He had heard several members of the committee on the Northampton Corn Exchange express their wonder that architects should have taken the trouble to send them such elaborate coloured drawings for so small a premium. He regretted he had so imperfectly expressed his views, but, in the hope that the meeting would not separate without protesting against the principle of competition, he begged to move as an amendment, "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the principle of competition, as regards architectural designs, is erroneous; and that it is the duty of every member of the profession who is anxious to advance his art, and make it conducive to its highest objects and chief results, to discountenance in every manner the continuance of it."

The amendment having been ultimately seconded.

Mr. G. R. French said he rose to move a further amendment. He thought they did not quite begin at the beginning; and in order to do so, he wished them to enunciate a principle the very reverse of the last proposition; dissenting, as he did, entirely from that view of the question. His amendment, which should perhaps be rather a substantive motion, was, "That in the opinion of this meeting, architectural competition, if founded upon just and honourable proceedings, is advantageous to the public and the profession."

Mr. W. P. Griffith seconded the amendment.

Mr. Young, although approving of Mr. French's amendment, thought the same doctrine was expressed in the report of the Architects' Institute, which the original motion proposed to adopt.

Mr. Wyatt Papworth thought the last amendment necessary; inasmuch as the publication of the original motion, without the report on which it was based, would not convey sufficient information to the public.

After some discussion,

The Chairman said he should be sorry if the first resolution of that meeting gave so direct an encouragement to architectural competition under all circumstances, as would follow from the adoption of Mr. French's amendment. The original motion neither approved nor dissented from the principle of competition; but taking things as it found them, sought for the best means of remedying the evils which it recognised.

Both amendments, put *seriatim*, were negatived by a large majority, and the original motion was carried unanimously.

The code of regulations proposed by the committee of the Architectural Association, copies of which had been circulated in the room, was considered as having been read to the meeting.

Mr. Hurst then moved the appointment of a committee to arrange definitely a code of regulations to be submitted to a future meeting. This, he said, was a question in which the junior members of the profession were chiefly interested. It was impossible to put down competition altogether, while so many members of the profession were unemployed; therefore, the best course was to endeavour to improve it. As no code that could be prepared would remove every difficulty, he would urge the meeting not to cavil about details. With the aid of the Institute and the profession at large, he was confident much good might be accomplished.

Mr. Boucher seconded the resolution, explaining that all the suggestions hitherto received would be referred to the proposed committee, who would also receive suggestions from individuals.

Mr. John Papworth observed that he feared the preparation of a satisfactory code was impracticable, as was evidently the feeling of the profession, by the fact that nothing had been done in the eleven years that had elapsed since the date of the Institute's Report. By refusing to compete unless the intended code was adopted by committees, architects would shut themselves out, and leave these committees to avail themselves of the services of unscrupulous men, who were unable to establish themselves in the profession. It was absurd, moreover, to expect that architects would abstain from using the influence of their friends, wherever it could be brought to bear in their favour. He thought, therefore, the contemplated proceedings had not a practical tendency.

Mr. Young, on the contrary, could not believe, after what had been already done, and the encouragement already received, that the present movement could fall to the ground. "Black sheep" would always be found; but building committees were very tenacious of the good or bad opinion of the profession; and if the united opinion of only fifty good men could be obtained, they need not fear the canvassing or touting of a few black sheep.

On the motion of Mr. J. Wyatt, seconded by Mr. Braithwaite, a committee was named; and on the motion of Mr. Edmeston, seconded by Mr. Billing, it was resolved that the proceedings be advertised.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman was then moved by Mr. Hall, and seconded by Mr. Laxton, in kinder terms than we can print.

Mr. Fowler, in putting the resolution to the meeting, said he should have been glad to have seen more of the senior members of the profession present, but their absence ought not to be taken as any discouragement; because professional movements of any kind never originated with the seniors. They, indeed, had no sufficient motive for attempting to introduce new modes of practice; and therefore it was peculiarly the province of the younger members to take up any measures in which energy and activity were required. The juniors were not only justified, but called upon to take the lead in the present question, as they were most interested in obtaining a better field for the exercise of their labours. He trusted that would be the result of their exertions, and if they pursued their object with energy, diligence, and integrity, they might be sure it would attract the attention and secure the approbation of the profession at large.

Mr. Godwin, in thanking the meeting, said, he had endeavoured, for some years, to the best of his ability, to uphold the dignity of the profession, to advance worth, and maintain truth; and should strive steadily to pursue the same course. He confidently anticipated a happy issue to their proceedings, aided as they were by all the influential bodies in the profession.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Young was then passed, and a subscription entered into to promote the objects of the meeting.

A PICTURE IN THE CITY.

YOUR paper, as well as many others, both weekly and daily, has given an account of the crypt at Guildhall, and of a "granite bowl of enormous weight," which may be seen there. Pray inform the public that there is, or was, deposited in the same subterraneous apartment, a large *historical picture*, which was, some years back, an object of much notoriety, and whose history and adventures may be regarded amongst romances of fact. It represents the memorable conflict between the English and French Armies in 1415, called "*The Battle of Agincourt.*" It was painted by Sir Robert Ker Porter, when just entering into public life as an artist. His genius and artistic talents attracted great notoriety in a short period of time, as he had previously produced and exhibited a large picture of the *Storming of Seringapatam*, more than 200 feet in length; also three other great historical paintings. These works not only astonished the public, but the members of the Royal Academy, whose president, Mr. West, Mr. Shee, and other Academicians, praised them as wonderful works for a boy. The painter was only nineteen when he executed the "Seringapatam," and which was painted in six weeks. After being exhibited to the public (at the Lyceum, London), who flocked in great numbers to see them, they were taken to several provincial cities and towns, and the painter derived great profits from them. The largest of the four was accidentally destroyed by fire. The "Agincourt" was rolled up and deposited in a city warehouse, when Mr. Porter went abroad. In 1808 he wrote a letter to the then Lord Mayor of London, Ansley, from Stockholm, offering the picture to the City, if a place could be found to hang it up in. He calls it "his last and best work," and as such he wished to have it carefully preserved in London. It was accepted, thanks returned, and the committee for letting the city lands were requested "to consider the best place to display the picture." This was in the year 1809, and it seems that it was hung up in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House. How long it remained there is not recorded, but it appears that the picture was accidentally discovered some twenty years afterwards, in the cellar of the Guildhall, and being unrolled and brought

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